Merle Gardner helps newborns at Wasatch Hospital

After 47 years of nursing duty, Merle Gardner still enjoys working in the nursery at Wasatch County Hospital.

Merle began her nursing career with studies at the hospital in Salt Lake, the St. Marks.

After her graduation, she stayed on to work at the hospital. She was asked to come to the Heber Valley hospital to take the place of one of the other nurses.

She remembers that it was 1935, in January. She said that it was only to be a two week change.

"But when I got here and saw the beautiful valley, I decided to stay," she remarked.

Zina Duke was the head nurse at the time when the change was taking place. Merle and Zina became very good friends.

"I like working in a smaller hospital," Merle stated Here at the old hospital she had to know everything.

Merle explained that she would sometimes be called into the hospital in the early hours to help in the delivery room.

She worked in surgery at the new hospital (Wasatch Co. Hospital) until 1977 when she retired.

She continued to help when the hospital was over loaded with patients. Now she only helps out in the nursery.

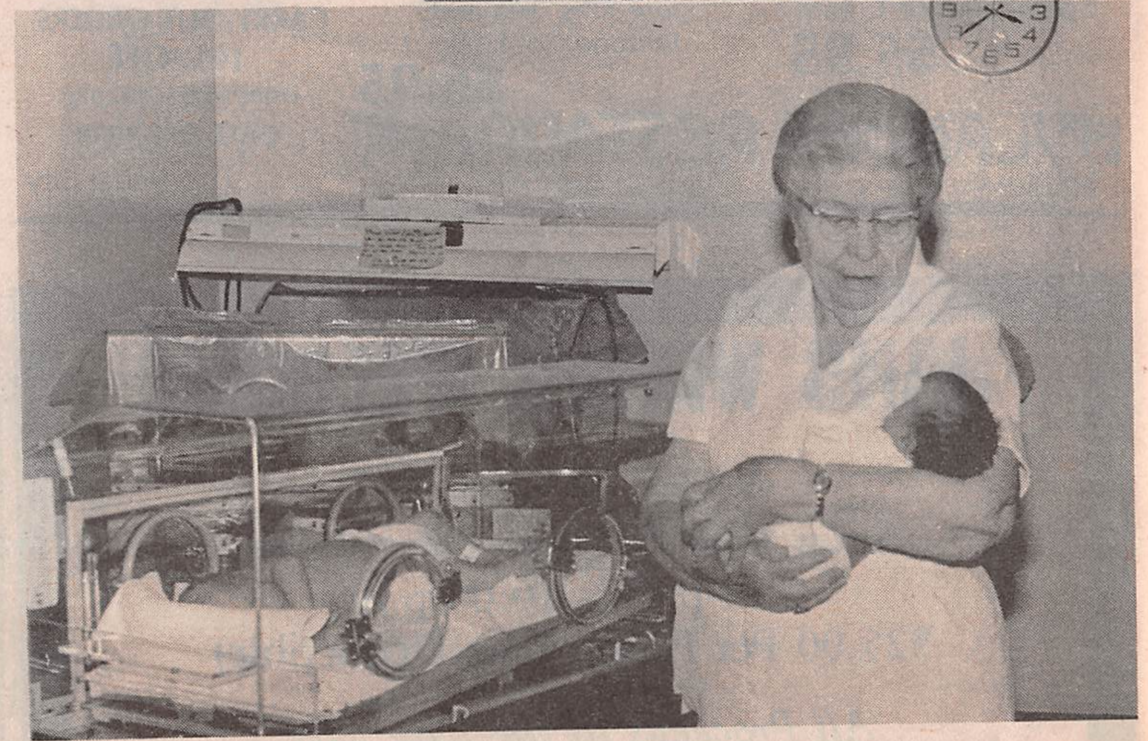
Merle is respected highly at the hospital. Her associates regard her as knowledgable and efficient.

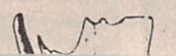
"If I was younger, I'd still be going strong." Merle commented. But she explains that all the new procedures are hard to keep up on. "They're making so much progress that you can't keep up with it."

Merle said that the most dramatic change in her 47 years of service, was the change from the old hospital to the new hospital.

"I've helped a lot of people during my years," Merle said, "I wouldn't know where to start a list."







Top: Merle reclines at home. Bottom: Merle works with the infants at Wasatch County Hospital.

Mother of thirty four

was treated individually. If the child was old enough to know or to choose a name, we either let it keep it's given or help choose a new one. The adopted children all took the surname 'Gerrard'. Our Indian children also used the surname 'Gerrard' in place of their tribal surnames. Sometimes we ended up with the same names for a child. Such was the case with the name John. We solved that problem by calling the boys Joh, Johnny, Little John and Big John. Each had his own identity. But, there are two girls names I just can't stand. If a girl came to us with either one of those names, I soon found a new one for her.''

With each question Mina answers about her family, I find three more to ask. Join us next week for more of her

As told by Mina Gerrard. Written by Carolyn Winters.

